

## FOREIGN CORRESPONDENCE.

SAN FRANCISCO, May 31, 1884.

There is never any summer in San Francisco, but on the other side of the bay, to right and left along behind the Coast Range, in the Sacramento and San Joaquin valleys, among the foothills and away up to the summit of Sierra, the common salutation "Is this warm enough for you?" is getting in its work upon the human constitution, and life has an added terror. The fruit season set in with uncommon austerity some weeks ago, and the mortality promises to exceed the proudest record of any summer since the whites began to settle the country in 1870. The eight-inch strawberry has been specially energetic in the business of depopulation, though the elephant-heart cherry is also entitled to honorable mention. A Boston excursionist at the Palace Hotel the other day, lifted a slice of cherry with both hands, inserted it between his teeth, sundered a gibbous fragment and remarked (spitting it out) that he had never tasted such fruit in his life. Such testimony as this is worth a hundred immigrants.

Speaking of testimony, I am naturally reminded of the great Hill-Sharon case, which is still "on." The trial has now been proceeding for a few months and they have got so far as already to have made an examination (by machinery) of the alleged marriage contract, and to have put Mr. Sharon on the witness stand to say whether he signed it. A person unlearned in the law would have thought that the examination of this paper and of Mr. Sharon would have been about the first business before the court, but the ways of lawyers are not as men's ways, particularly if either party litigant has the bad luck to be rich. The unwholesome effects of scandal trials on public morality is commonly enough affirmed in a general way, and in and in a general way conceded, but in this instance it has been strikingly manifested that these effects are specific and immediate; the process of "lowering the moral tone" is distinctly visible in its various stages. When the trial began, the language employed even by such journals as the *Chronicle* in narrating or discussing its indelicate details, as they came out in the testimony was studiously so softened as not to "offend the most fastidious"—"the most fastidious" being naturally averse to the publication of any coarse language that they are likely to be rightly suspected of having read. But the public appetite for plain speaking has been gradually educated to the liberal catholicity of that of a pet pig; it will now take anything, and the newspapers publish the evidence in pretty pearly the terms that it is given in. They have thrown off all restraint; words and phrases never before seen in a public journal, even in San Francisco, besprinkle their reports like the glouts and splashes of decayed eggs on a wall. "The most fastidious" appear to have left the country, but this is a delusion. The truth is that most of them, seeing the error of their ways, have "flopped," and the remnant remaining loyal to the old flag—a maiden's blush—is too insignificant for editorial consideration.

California's delegates to the national Republican Convention, their hearts full of enthusiasm for Blaine, and their hides somewhat distended with whiskey, started for Chicago on Monday the 26th, in a special train, with some two hundred and fifty Republican friends of all sorts of sexes. It is understood that they are to be nothing out of pocket—the delegates—on account of their patriotic service to the party; the Central Pacific Railroad Company passes them both ways and "Colonel" Fred Crocker will supply them with such food and drink as they require during their sojourn in the city of the American Hog; it is for that high function that he was himself made a Delegate. He is rich and their wants are very simple—they want all that is going.

At the present time the prospect of Blaine's nomination is dark. It appears to be the rule in Republican National Conventions for an aspirant's friends to stand by him so long as they have any hope of nominating him, and then combine with the friends of every other aspirant except the strongest one, in order to beat that luckless per-

son out of that luckless person's political boots. Twice already Mr. Blaine has had a practical illustration of the peril of being stronger in delegates than any one of his opponents, but not quite as strong as all of them together.

The Democrats are becoming nearly a unit for Tilden, who, there is some reason to believe, does not want the Presidency, but does want the President; By permitting the use of his name till the last moment, he can, through his extraordinary popularity, shut off discussion of other candidates, gather under his "banner" a majority of the delegates, and then in the nick of time (perhaps after indulging himself in the compliment of an actual nomination) turn them over to the man of his choice, and experience the deep and commendable satisfaction of renouncing the vanity of ambition for the profit of renunciation.

General Grant is out of the race; the collapse of the swindling concern which, with no capital but his name, succeeded in failing for some ten millions of dollars, has buried him fathoms deep. He has done again what he has so often done before—what he did in his last Presidential message, to excuse the corrupt administration that the country has ever seen—endeavored to show that he is not a rogue by confessing himself a fool. His sense of the difference between rascality and stupidity, however, is not very keen. His wicked partner, Mr. Ferdinand Ward—now in jail—had an exceedingly simple method of doing business. He represented that General Grant's influence and President Arthur's corrupt collusion enabled the firm to make enormous profits out of dishonest Government contracts. In the hope of participating in the profits, and probably partly from pride in being associated with persons so illustrious in swindles of such surpassing magnitude, capitalists eagerly advanced Mr. Ward all the money that he wanted. Grant now feelingly avers that he knew nothing of all this, his only function besides pocketing his share of the boot—having been to sign his name where he was told that it would do the most good. One thing, however, he admits having done on his own responsibility—borrowed a hundred and fifty thousand dollars of W. H. Vanderbilt a few days before the failure. In part payment of this debt, he has made over the whole of his property to this preferred creditor, whose needy condition moved his compassion. It is infinitely creditable to the simplicity of the American character that—until now—no doubts have been expressed nor apparently entertained as to the genuineness of this transaction. After Grant shall have been legally purged of his liabilities it will be interesting to see if the property be not restored, and the great millionaire credited by his admiring countrymen with an act of generosity distinctly heroic.

The panic in New York that was partly caused and partly precipitated by the failure of the swindling concern under Mr. Ward's management is now in process of subsidence. It has hurt speculators and other gamblers worse than anybody else. California's "favorite son," Mr. Jim Keene, took the precaution to fail before the panic began—he was always a forehanded fellow and an early riser. It has been calculated that the shrinkage in securities of all kinds amounted to about \$75,000,000 and there is a tendency to bewail with sad sincerity the loss of so much wealth to the country. It is a very solemn, solemn reflection indeed that in the little game of stocks, so large a sum could be lost without anybody winning it—that by merely bawling out lower figures one day that they bawled out on the day preceding, a knot of gentlemen, calling themselves an Exchange, could accomplish so enormous a destruction of property! If it is true that this can be done it suggests a new method of warfare. Instead of ravaging an enemy's country, plundering cities, destroying crops, demolishing bridges and railways and annexing chickens a-roost in trees, it would be cheaper to insinuate a number of accomplished brokers into the hostile stock exchange to "bear" all manner of securities. This would be, in some respects, a less inconvenient process than striking "for God and your native land" and being, in return, struck for God

and the native land of the other crowd.

The history of the recent special session of the California Legislature in bold outline is this—it may perhaps not be well known in the Islands. The men at the head of the Central and Southern Pacific Railroad companies, Messrs. Stanford, Huntington and Crocker, after a career of almost unparalleled robbery, in which they have made use of every corrupt means known to the political highwayman's profession, became at last so rich and unscrupulous as openly to defy the power of the State whose judicial, legislative, journalistic and even social machinery they controlled. They decided to pay no more taxes except upon valuations fixed by themselves, and for three years successfully resisted every effort to collect. Two of the three Railroad Commissioners, Messrs. Carpenter and Humphrey's, are in their pay, and though pledged to make "material reductions" in freights and fares, have done, and will do nothing. For many months their own political party stormed at them with the shot and shell of denunciation and raised a horrible clamor for their removal. Nearly the whole Democratic party, and every Republican who had decency enough to prefer the welfare of the State to a prospect of partizan triumph through making capital of an opponent's blunders, urged Governor Stoneman to call an extra session of the Legislature, to provide revenue for the State Government by compelling the railroad people to pay their millions of overdue taxes, to break up the Commission and to establish some *modus vivendi* between the giant monopoly and the people. The Governor at last consented and the extra session was called. It would be too much to affirm that they were no undercurrents of selfish intrigue and personal ambition also interested in bringing about this result, as in opposing it. In California, as elsewhere, self-seeking politicians are not too proud to hitch their chariots to the right, if their antagonists have harnessed the wrong and they can do no better. But on the part of the Governor there is no reason to doubt that he called the extra session in good faith and for the honest purposes specified in his proclamation. The session was long and storming. It cost \$80,000 and three bills were passed—two appropriating money to pay the members and one providing for the funding of an insignificant debt by one of the counties. Not a single measure of relief could be got through both Houses. Not one of the objects specified in the Governor's proclamation was attained. Many excellent bills were passed by the Assembly, but all were killed in the Senate. Both bodies are Democratic, but in the Senate, the Republican minority stood throughout the session seven to one for the railroads. A combination of these seven with a sufficient number of renegade Democrats and Lieutenant-Governor Daggett, the presiding officer, thwarted the will of the people and riveted the railroad irons upon them more securely than ever. The Railroad Commission, it is needless to say, was undisturbed and is now unalarmed. Both political parties are now engaged in sedulously "apportioning the blame," each conceding it all to its opponent. Public indignation is intense, but no leader of men has arisen to give it practical effect; it finds utterance only in the immemorial way—through the politicians, with their imbecile "resolutions" and resultless "denunciations," and through the honest portion of the press with its interminable and infantine chatter about "legal remedies" the "majesty of the people's will" and the lightning-like efficacy of "the ballot"—all the bald and toothless platitudes that hobble through the political vocabulary of spiritless peoples comforting themselves in their shame by parroting the praises of the system under which they have been enslaved and by boasts of a power of which the last vestige has long disappeared. If anything is certain outside the mathematics, it is certain that human society, as at present organized, is helpless under iron hand of this new and startling tyranny—the Corporation. Its growth has been so startling, its encroachments have been so insidious in their form and bewildering in their results, that no provision can forecast and no resistance avail. In the last

twenty years this aggressive new power in the affairs of men has attained to an overtopping dominance that menaces civilization itself. It is plain that the right to aggregate and handle unlimited capital must be in some way abridged if individual liberty is to be preserved. The first formidable battle against the young giant has been made at Sacramento. The result is irreparable defeat.

No. 2.

SAN FRANCISCO, June 2, 1884.

If some of this letter is devoted to personalities, your readers will forgive them for they will be all about visitors to the Islands by the steamer which takes this, and an interesting party it is too. First, I feel like mentioning Joseph Tilden—"Joe" Tilden, as he is called by the hundreds who know and love him well in this city. Mr. Tilden, I am told, goes to Honolulu with a view of associating himself with the management of the Royal Hawaiian Hotel. If his views are carried out the Islands are to be congratulated, for a more genial and estimable gentleman it would be difficult to find, and what is much to the purpose, if his business relations are established there, there is no man more particularly fitted for the hotel management. He is noted beyond the limits of this State as a *bon vivant* of the Sam Ward order. That is, his fellowship and social qualities stand on an equal prominence with his knowledge of how to live and make others live happily. Last Thursday night Mr. Tilden was given a farewell dinner at the Bohemian Club by about thirty-five prominent members of the Club, and in many respects it was one of the most notable dinners ever given by that club of dinner giving.

Another passenger by the Mariposa is Sands W. Forman, a prominent young merchant here, and a member of the Lake Bigler Forestry Commission. Mr. Forman sails with his charming wife and daughter, and will probably remain on the Islands several months. I hope some one interested in arboriculture on the Islands will have a few sessions with Mr. Forman, for I have an idea that several of the trees which have thrived so well, and help so much in the advancement of Honolulu, will do equally well in the warmer parts of this State. The next Legislature will undoubtedly establish a State Forestry Commission for us, and I hazard the guess that the Governor will recognize Mr. Forman's energy in the Lake Bigler Commission by making him the member of the permanent Commission.

Another passenger is Henry Heyman, one of the prominent musicians of this State. To Mr. Heyman San Francisco owes much of its opportunities for hearing first-class orchestral music, towards the promotion of which he has frequently lent his efforts, and always successfully. I shall feel disappointed if Mr. Berger does not interest Mr. Heyman in some of the native music, whereby in the future we may be benefited.

Regarding another passenger, Dan O'Connell, I am, by the ethics of our profession, prevented from saying much. A newspaper man may say very pleasant things about whom he likes—excepting, always, another newspaper man. Mr. O'Connell goes to the Islands to take editorial charge of the paper I write this letter for, and I am thus debarred from saying many agreeable things about his brilliant career here, which I would gladly do otherwise.

In these good United States there is absolutely nothing talked about, written about, or thought about now, except the probable work of the National Republican Convention, which meets in Chicago this week. Even commerce is affected by the excitement over the event. Chicago is already filled with the prominent politicians of the party, who are laying deep wires for the candidates of their choice at this writing. Blaine appears to be the favorite in the race.

Arthur comes next, and Logan, John Sherman, Edmonds, Lincoln, string along over the course. Any one of them, or even some unmentioned dark horse, may pass the present leader on the home stretch, though, as I have read, Blaine at present has a splendid lead.

The *Wasp* of last Saturday has a cartoon representing the departure of our delegates to the Convention; Jopa

Charles [Crocker handing his hopeful offspring (Fred.) to Frank Pixley to be wetnursed on the overland journey. It was decidedly *apropos* for the gallant "Colonel" Fred, has been represented all the way over by Mr. Pixley I blush to say it; but our delegation procession. There was music and speeches, hurrahs and flags and wine galore at the principal stations, and everywhere Mr. Pixley spoke for his infantile charge, "Colonel" Fred Crocker.

The joke of the week is the partially successful effort of the Irish dynamiters to blow up the police headquarters in London.

The English statesmen and nobles prominently opposed to the Irish are now asking anxiously where they can find safety if the very stronghold of the police can be half-blown up by the active disciples of O'Donovan Rossa.

COMRADE.

## THE MORALITY OF IT.

As between the methods of a highwayman and those of the stockbroker Ward we must confess a partiality for the former. They are in comparison more open and of less effect. But the old highwayman and his methods have been crowded out by the advance of civilization, and in his place we have the defaulter and the swindler whose operations have unfortunately kept pace with the opportunities offered, and, in fact, are somewhat in advance. In like manner the smuggler of yesterday has been superseded by the importer who brings in his goods under false invoices. The spirit is the same in either case, but the means employed to attain the end are very different.

Ward knew that he was playing a role which must have an end. He must have known the dishonesty and even criminality of it, unless we suppose that his moral faculties were dead, and this we have no right to assume. For we are told that his "boyhood had the peaceful environment of a rural parsonage. His education was carefully supervised, the moral part not being neglected." Yet it is difficult to imagine how he could have become so lost to a sense of right and justice, of his own reputation and the reputations of those connected with him, as to coolly steal—no other term can describe his methods—millions under the cloak of friendship. This is common enough among men who have not had an opportunity to educate their moral sense, and who have been placed in responsible positions where great temptations are set before them. In Ward's case there is no excuse. He has abused himself and all who have had connections with him. He has deliberately committed fault after fault, and so openly that at any time a full exposure might have been expected. He has traded upon the reputation of a name greatly honored among us, and has used it as a tool for his jobbery and swindles. The extent of the ruin he has wrought is as yet only conjectural, but it is enormous, and there is no redeeming feature in the case. Honor was thrust aside; the thought of wife, home and friends did not deter him in his mad career; he ruthlessly sacrificed all in an insane pursuit after wealth. If he ever realized the collapse, which was inevitable, he gave no outward sign, nor to our knowledge has he shown any feeling since the crash. The full history of his career may never be known, but the effects of his operations promise to be lasting. That it will deter others from attempting to imitate his example on a smaller scale we do not believe. So long as the public is gullible there will be financial and other quacks to play upon it. Even as it is, this failure deserves to take rank among the great impostures which have depended for their success upon human credulity.

Dr. Kohler says that if silk tissues are impregnated with chromate of copper and then exposed to the direct sunshine, various shades of brown may be obtained, and the fabric is rendered waterproof.

The Italian Government has determined to offer, on the occasion of opening the Turin Exhibition, a prize of £420 for the most practical process for the transmission of electricity.

The German Government have lately instituted some experiments in the direction of substituting a dynamo-electric machine for the voltaic batteries commonly used in telegraph work.

On account of several recent cases of death in England among children who had been fed on wheaten biscuit, a physician states in the British Medical Journal that infants under six or eight months should be fed with nothing whatever but milk.